

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to FIG. 2. This sheet replaces the original sheet including FIG. 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet.

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 17-19 were amended in this response. No new matter has been introduced as a result of the amendments. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Office Action indicate the oath/declaration was defective because the date stated for prior foreign application does not correspond to the date on the certified copy of the priority document. Applicant is in the process of obtaining new declarations and will file them in due course.

The drawings were objected to for informalities. In light of the amendments to the drawings, applicants submit the informalities have been corrected. Withdrawal of the objection is earnestly requested.

Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Shankar* (US Patent 6,768,733). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly requested.

Specifically, *Shankar* does not teach or suggest the features of providing a signaling unit having at least two (or three) line units “connected to one another and used to set up a connection for transmitting user data, wherein at least one of the line units uses a different external signaling protocol as compared to the other line units” and “passing on signaling messages, arriving at one of the at least one line units using a different external signaling protocol for switching of the data packets, to another of the line units with the aid of internal signaling messages defined for the signaling unit, wherein the internal signaling identifies an appropriate line unit for passing on signaling messages given the protocol that is required.” as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 17-19. Under the claimed configuration, signaling processes are done within one signaling unit by using an internal signaling protocol. More specifically, the internal signaling protocol provides the interface between the different line units of the signaling unit, where the line units are used for the conversion of different external signaling protocol into the internal, signaling protocol and vice versa. Thus, line units for different external signaling protocols can be developed and integrated into a signaling unit to adapt to new tasks with a data network.

In contrast, *Shankar* discloses a method and a telecommunication network for communicating voice over a packet-switching network (see Abstract). The voice calls are

carried from an originating node to a terminating node over a packet-switching network, in which the voice signaling processing is separated from the processing of the voice data (col. 4, lines 19-26). For the voice signaling processing signaling units are used at the originating and terminating side. The signaling units comprise three abstract machine components which are instantiated for each call handled by the protocol converter. The protocol converter is set up as a virtual switch in *Shankar*, where individual protocol converters are arranged within respective signaling units (FIG. 1: 120, 140), where each protocol converter is assigned to a specific node (FIG. 1: 100, 160 - col. 5, lines 6-22).

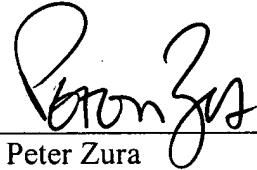
Furthermore, each protocol converter has three abstract machine components (originating call control (OCC), the universal call model (UCM) and the terminating call control (TCC)), where the OCC receives the signaling messages from the originating node unit and transforms them into universal protocol messages (col. 5, lines 24-35). The universal protocol messages are forwarded to the UCM, which uses them to control the originating code unit using a control link (col. 5, lines 36-40). The universal protocol messages are then transferred to the TCC, which converts them into a signaling message of the protocol that provides connectivity to the terminating signaling unit (col. 5, lines 48-53).

Thus, *Shankar* teaches a signaling unit (protocol converter) that takes incoming messages and converts them (via UCM), to a different protocol. This is materially different from the presently amended claims that "pass on" signaling messages by identifying an appropriate line unit given the protocol that is required (see amended specification, pages 9-10). No UCM device is required in the present claims - as an example, the line unit connected to the originating side of the call under the present claims sets up a signaling connection to a line unit connected to a terminating side of the call and passes on the signaling.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-19 are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. Applicants earnestly request an early Notice of Allowance. If any fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Examiner is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket number (0112740-273) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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